

# Characteristics of concerned persons accessing treatment services in their own right:

A secondary analysis of Irish health data for 2010 to 2020

## Lisbon Addictions 2022

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# Overview

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Introduction



Background



Study aims



Methods



Results

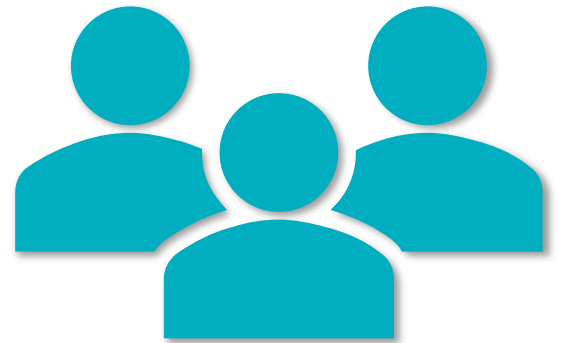


Conclusions

# Introduction

***Concerned persons (CPs)*** are friends, colleagues, and family members affected by another person's substance use or behavioural addictions.

> 100m worldwide <sup>1</sup>



A source of recovery capital  
and deserving of support  
in their own right.

# Background



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Stress and strain experienced by CPs can negatively impact health <sup>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,10</sup>

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Social support enhances coping and reduces negative impacts on health and functioning <sup>8, 10</sup>

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Barriers exist for CPs seeking help, such as stigma, fear and shame <sup>7, 10</sup>

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CPs tend to be females in their 40s and 50s <sup>1, 8, 9, 10, 11</sup>

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Children are especially vulnerable <sup>12</sup>

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# Background



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CPs are largely “unknown and uncounted” <sup>1, 13</sup>

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Prevalence data are lacking <sup>1, 3, 14</sup>

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Some data from population surveys <sup>2</sup>

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**National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)** has collected data on CPs since 2010 <sup>15</sup>

# Study aims



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Describe characteristics of CPs seeking treatment in their own right, and the services they received.



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Provide evidence to inform measures to address the support needs of CPs.

# Methods

Secondary analysis of data from:

## National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)

- an Irish national health surveillance database.

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Recording of CP data was optional

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255 services returned CP data

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## Included data

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13,744 referrals 2010-2020

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3,842 treated cases 2016-2020

# Results



# Age of referrals

**6.5% = children**

Median age child = 15y

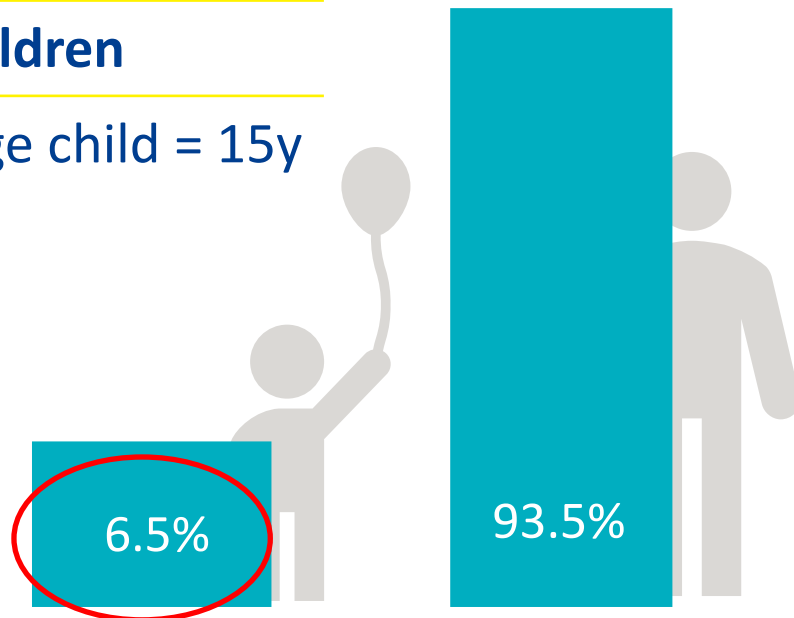
**93.5% = adult**

Median age adult = 46y

26.2% = 45-54 years

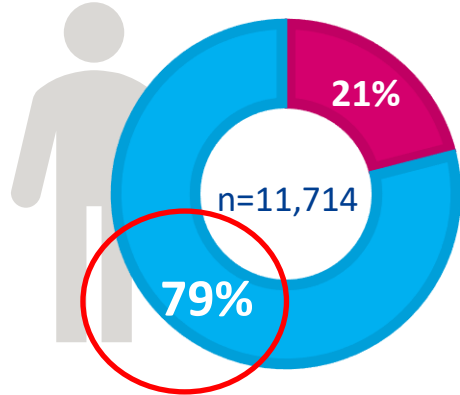
22.1% = 35-44 years

6.5% = 18-24 years



# Gender of referrals

■ M ■ F



## FEMALES

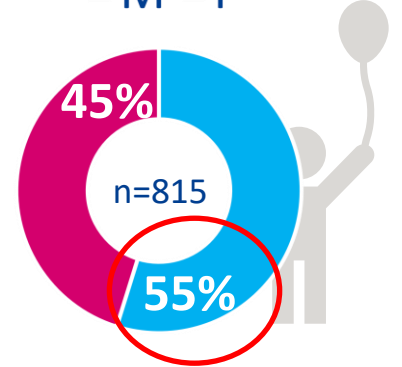
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79.0% of **adult** referrals

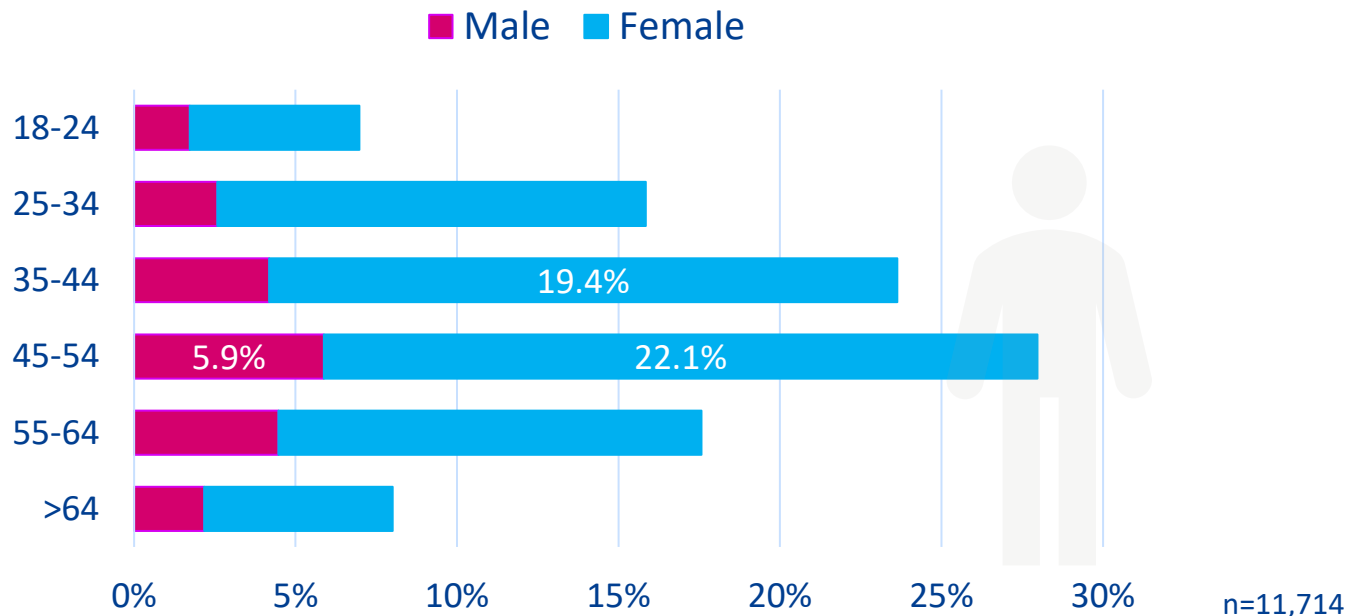
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54.8% of **child** referrals

■ M ■ F



# Gender and age group



# Living circumstances

**Adult**  
referrals  
(n=11,373)

42.7% with partner and  
child(ren)

19.0% alone with child(ren)

14.2% with partner alone

11.8% with parents or family


9.5% alone

**Child**  
referrals  
(n=807)

93.2% with parents  
and family

# Employment

**Adult** 50.9% employed  
referrals (n=10,767) 20.4% unemployed  
12.8% homemakers  
4.5% education or training



**Child** 94.2% in education  
referrals (n=796)



# Language and country of birth

**Country  
of birth**  
(n=5,384)

12.1% of all referrals  
were born outside  
Ireland

**Language  
at home**  
(n=4,357)

12.5% of all referrals  
spoke a language other  
than the country's  
official languages  
(English or Irish)

# Source of referral

**Adult**  
referrals  
(n=3,443)

63.1% self referral

12.7% social /  
community services

10.9% family and  
friends



**Child**  
referrals  
(n=324)

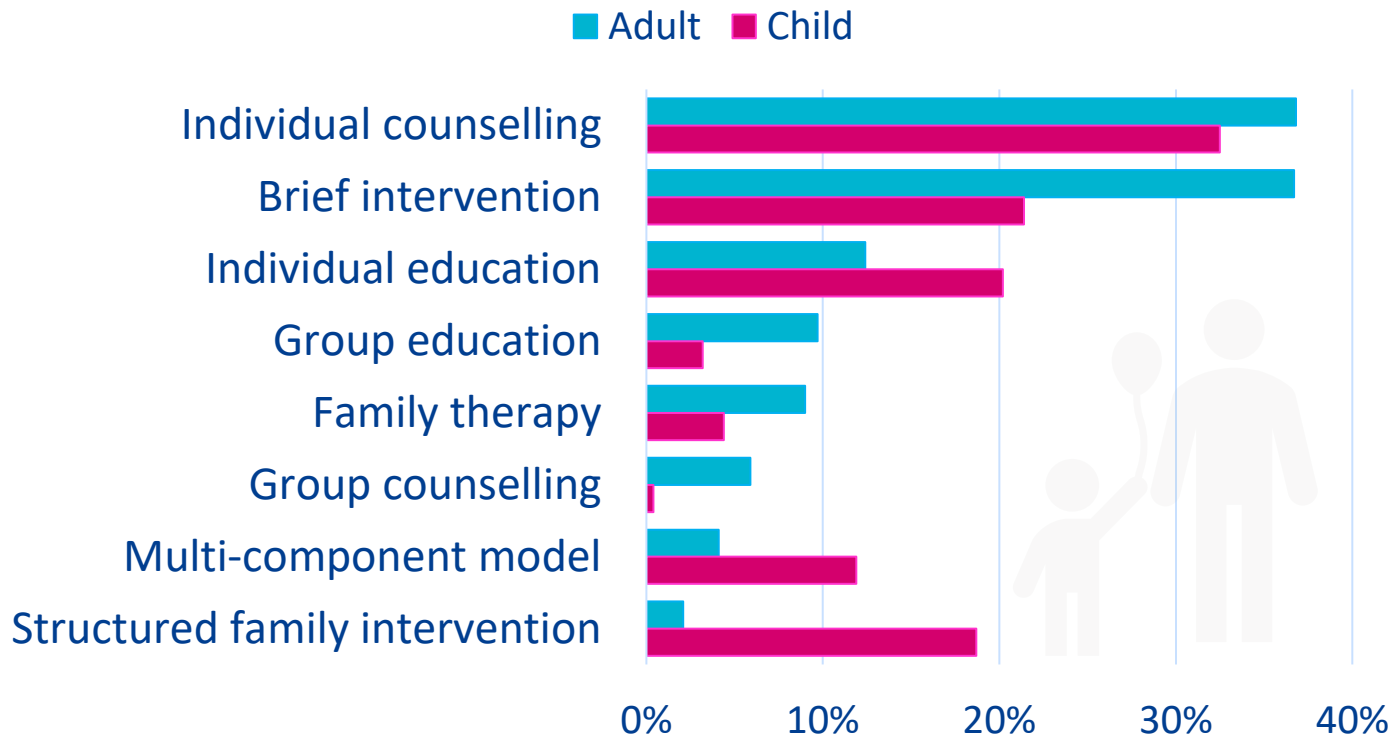
40.7% family and friends

25.6% social /  
community services

16.4% school / college



# Treatment





# Summary

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## Services received 13,744 referrals for CPs

- Four-in-five were females
- Two-in-five were females aged 35 to 54 years
- Referrals included children, many aged < 15 years
- Three quarters of young adult referrals were females
- Most were living with others
- One-in-ten spoke a language other than the national languages

# Conclusion

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## NDTRS is the only national dataset on CPs

- Need and demand for treatment is likely much greater
- Difficult to assess the extent of hidden harm <sup>14</sup>
- Routine monitoring is a valuable source of evidence on CPs and hidden harm
- Include further variables on CPs, associated problems, family relationships, living circumstances

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# Thank you

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